

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOGADI 01239 240912Z POSS DUPE
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-07 EA-07
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R 240630Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5077
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1239

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SO, UR, IT
SUBJECT: SIAD ATTACKS SOVIET HEGEMOIC AMBITIONS IN AFRICA

SUMMARY: IN CONVERSATION WITH ITALIAN MINISTER MARIO PEDINI
JULY 17, SIAD ATTACKED SOVIET HEGEMONIC AMBITIONS IN HORN AND
DANGERS WHICH SOVIET-SUPPLIED ETHIOPIAN THREAT POSES TO NEIGHBORING
AFRICAN AND ARAB NATIONS. SIAD SAID THAT SOMALIA WOULD BE FIRST
TARGET OF SOVIET-BACKED ETHIOPIAN AGGRESSION, WITH SUDAN AND EGYPT
SOON TO FOLLOW. SIAD MADE PLEA FOR ITALIAN ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE BUT DID NOT REP NOT SPECIFICALLY RAISE QUESTION OF ARMS
WITH PEDINI OR HIS TECHNICAL GROUP. DESPITE SIAD'S RECRIMINATIONS,
THERE WAS NO INDICATION HE INTENDS OPEN RUPTURE WITH SOVIET UNION.

1. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR BRIEFED ME ON JULY 22 ON SIAD'S REMARKS
TO ITALIAN MINISTER FOR CULTURAL ASSETS AND ENVIRONMENT MARIO
PEDINI WHO LED ITALIAN CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL DELEGATION TO SOMALI
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JULY 16-19. SIAD SPOKE TO PEDINI JULY 17. NO STRANGER TO SOMALIA,
PEDINI STRUCK BY COMPLETE ABOUT-FACE WHICH SIAD HAS UNDERGONE
SINCE THEY LAST MET IN 1973.

2. SIAD TOLD PEDINI THAT RUSSIANS HAD NOW CHOSEN ETHIOPIA AS
INSTRUMENT FOR ITS AMBITIONS IN HORN. HE SAID THAT AFTER MANY
YEARS EXPERIENCE, SOMALIS UNDERSTOOD HOW SOVIETS WORKED TO ADVANCE

THEIR HEGEMONIC AMBITIONS -- FIRST IN PROVIDING ARMS FOR NEEDY NATIONS THEN IN USING THOSE NATIONS AS BASE FOR THEIR STRATEGIC AMBITIONS. SIAD SAID SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY CHOICES WERE FOR MOSCOW TO DECIDE BUT HE COULD NOT BUT REGRET SOVIET DECISION TO SUPPORT BARBARIC MENGISTU REGIME IN ETHIOPIA WITH VAST AMOUNTS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT. CONSEQUENCES OF THAT CHOICE HAD IMPLICATIONS FOR ALL NATIONS IN REGION. SOMALIA WOULD BE FIRST TO SUFFER ETHIOPIAN AGGRESSION, BUT SUDAN AND EGYPT WOULD FOLLOW IN DUE COURSE. EVEN SAUDI ARABIA WOULD NOT BE IMMUNE TO THREAT OF SOVIET MISSILES IN ERITREA, SIAD SAID. EUROPEAN NATIONS LIKE ITALY COULDN'T IGNORE SOVIET MACHINATIONS IN HORN OF AFRICA.

3. ACCORDING TO ITALIAN AMBASSADOR, SIAD ALSO MADE OBLIQUE REFERENCE TO SOVIET BASES IN SOMALIA. HE DISPOSED OF SUBJECT IN FEW WORDS BY SAYING THAT MATTER OF SOVIET BASES IN SOMALIA WAS FINISHED.

4. ITALIAN-SOMALI TALKS WERE ENTIRELY FREE OF RECRIMINATIONS AND DISCORD--IN CONTRAST TO DISCUSSIONS OF PREVIOUS YEARS. SOMALIS MADE PLEA FOR ADDITIONAL ITALIAN HELP WITH NATIONAL UNIVERSITY AND WITH BANANA EXPORTS (MORE SHIPS).

5. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR BELIEVES AS WE DO THAT SIAD HAS NOT RPT NOT MADE DECISION TO SEVER TIES WITH MOSCOW OR SEND SOVIET MILITARY ADVISORS HOME. AT ONE POINT IN CONVERSATION, SIAD REPORTEDLY IMPLIED THAT RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW WOULD BE MAINTAINED, THEN STATED CONFIDENTIAL

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FLATLY THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF RELATIONS QTE MEANS NOTHING AT ALL UNQTE. ITALIANS ALSO HAVE IMPRESSION THAT ANY SOVIET WITHDRAWALS OF PERSONNEL FROM SOMALIA HAVE BEEN MADE ON INITIATIVE OF MOSCOW, RATHER THAN SIAD.

6. ITALIANS ALSO BELIEVE THAT SOVIETS ARE COUNTINUING TO SUPPLY SIAD WITH MILITARY EQUIPMENT (EGYPTIAN MIL ATTACHE TELLS US SAME THING) BUT THAT SOVIET ITEMS ARE HEAVY WEAPONS -- TANKS, FOR EXAMPLE -- RATHER THAN LIGHT WEAPONS NEEDED BY SOMALI MILITARY. THERE ARE SEVERAL RUSSIAN SHIPS IN PORT AT PRESENT TIME.

7. SIAD REFERRED TO US ONLY IN PASSING. HE NOTED THAT WHILE SUPER POWERS -- USSR, US AND CHINA -- HAD THE ABILITY TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT IN ARMS AND TECHNOLOGY, SMALL NATIONS, LIKE SOMALIA, WERE FORCED INTO A SUITOR OR DEPENDENCY RELATIONSHIP. SOMALIA WAS BOUND TO ITALY BY TIES OF HISTORY AND NOW SIAD WISHED TO SEE THOSE BONDS STRENGTHENED.
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